

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22

2 INTRODUCED BY A. OLSEN

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4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
5 MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF WAYS TO IMPROVE PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION
6 SERVICE AND PUBLIC TRANSIT IN MONTANA; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE
7 STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 68TH LEGISLATURE.

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9 WHEREAS, passenger rail, air, and bus services provide mobility for senior citizens, persons with
10 disabilities, students, tourists, and business people; and

11 WHEREAS, some communities in Montana are poorly served by public transportation, and options for
12 passenger transportation services in Montana continue to decline; and

13 WHEREAS, if state services are unavailable, many Montanans need local, tribal, or county
14 transportation services for help getting to appointments for medical or other physical needs; and

15 WHEREAS, Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha ceased operation through southern Montana in 1979, and
16 transportation to and from the major population centers of southern Montana would be greatly enhanced by
17 passenger rail service; and

18 WHEREAS, additional passenger transportation services will increase passenger transportation-related
19 employment because of the need for upgraded infrastructure and operating personnel; and

20 WHEREAS, tourism is Montana's second-largest industry and would be enhanced by improved
21 passenger transportation services and public transit; and

22 WHEREAS, the Empire Builder is one of the most popular long-distance passenger trains in the United
23 States, and it is greatly needed for the citizens of Montana's Hi-Line who have limited public transportation
24 options, but it is challenged by lack of rail capacity causing frequent delays; and

25 WHEREAS, there is currently no board or commission within the State of Montana that is charged with
26 the sole responsibility of overseeing and advocating for passenger transportation services, including passenger
27 rail, passenger air, public transit, and passenger bus services; and

28 WHEREAS, autonomous vehicles may provide one option for transportation needs in Montana in the

1 future, and more studies are needed to determine whether laws need to be changed to accommodate
2 autonomous vehicles and whether policies are necessary to address safety, licensing, and other issues of
3 public concern.

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5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
6 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

7 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to
8 section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to investigate ways to improve passenger
9 transportation and public transit services in Montana, including but not limited to the establishment of a
10 passenger transportation commission and a review of laws that may need changing to allow the use of
11 autonomous vehicles and provide for public safety.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be
13 presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review
15 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2022.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,
17 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 68th Legislature.

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